



MEDICAL CONTROL DIRECTIVE 2023-16

DATE: August 28, 2023

TO: Pinellas County EMS Agencies
Pinellas County Emergency Communications
Pinellas County Certified EMTs and Paramedics
Pinellas County Certified Advanced Practice Paramedics, Nurses
Pinellas County Online Medical Control Physicians
Pinellas County Ambulance Billing and Financial Services
ED Nurse Managers

FROM: Dr. Angus Jameson, EMS Medical Director

RE: Hurricane Idalia Disaster Standards of Care Guidance

DISTRIBUTION/TRAINING PERIOD: August 28, 2023

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

I. Prior to Arrival of Hazardous Weather

- a) Normal standards of care should be maintained for as long as practical and safe prior to arrival of hazardous weather conditions
- b) Units may be tasked to transport patients to non-hospital destinations
- c) A PCR (may be abbreviated, paper is acceptable) should be completed on all patient encounters
- d) System Status Management for hospital destination is in effect
- d) OLMC will be available for case-by-case consults for required alterations in normal care

II. During Hazardous Weather/Disaster Operations

- a) **Altered Standards of Care:** Storm units responding during hazardous weather may provide care as able but focus should be on **primary stabilization and evacuation**. Refer to the "Warm Zone" in Protocol CS21 for appropriate standards of care during hazardous conditions (see below for summary):

Warm Zone Standards of Care Summary:

- Triage assessment using standard START Triage may be attempted
- Cardiac arrest patients may not be considered candidates for resuscitation efforts based on available resources
- Care in this situation should be focused on control of external hemorrhage, management of penetrating chest trauma and pneumothorax, and basic airway maneuvers
- Other limited ALS interventions may be possible dependent on level of hazard and available resources but are not required

c) **Transportation and documentation:**

- All patients including “Alerts” (Trauma, Stemi, Stroke, Sepsis) will be transported to the closest open facility unless a specialty facility is readily available nearby.
- First Responders are not required to ride in.
- **Alternate non-ambulance vehicles may be used to transport patients as needed.**
- Disaster/Special event logs may be used for documentation if PCR’s are not available.

d) **OLMC:**

- OLMC Physicians will be available for consults for as long as communications remain operational.
- **If unable to contact OLMC, clinicians should use their best judgment in caring for their patients and are authorized to perform all interventions (including OLMC orders, cessation of efforts, and refusals) during disaster operations**

III. During Recovery Efforts Post Storm

a) Return to normal standards of care should occur as soon as possible

b) Timeframe will depend upon extent of disaster and resource availability and may be variable by agency, geographic location etc.